

The NORTHWEST AIRLIFTER

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McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

Connecting Team McChord with the Combat Airlift Mission

March 14, 2008

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10th Airlift Squadron return cause for celebration

By
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff writer

The 10th Airlift Squadron's return home March 5 marked the first time in nearly two and a half years that all four of McChord's active duty flying squadrons are home at the same time.

McChord's four active duty flying squadrons share responsibility for the deployed squadron as part of the aerospace expeditionary force concept, but for the next four months the lone active duty C-17 Globemaster III squadron at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., will take the open spot in the deployment rotation as the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, headquartered at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. It is responsible for scheduling, planning and executing all C-17 missions into the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility including Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 4th AS will return to the rotation later this year.

All four flying squadrons being home gives squadron commanders an opportunity to meet face-to-face and discuss mission-related issues, said Lt. Col. Brian Newberry, 7th AS commander.

See HOME, Page 4



1st Lieutenants Scott Durham, right, and Zachary Dorman, both from the 10th Airlift Squadron, share a moment with spouses Katie and Emily on the flightline upon returning March 5 from a 120-day deployment.

Deployed spouses dinner offers chance to connect

By
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff writer

Spouses of McChord's deployed Airmen and their family members are invited to attend a dinner in their honor 6 p.m. Monday at the Chapel Support Center, Bldg. 746.

The dinner and gathering offers spouses a chance to get out of the house, enjoy a nice dinner and network with other spouses also coping with deployments, said Laila Christensen, a community readiness consultant with the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The menu for Monday's dinner is Italian food and will feature fettuccini alfredo, chicken parmigiana, salad

and rolls.

In addition to meeting other spouses, the dinner also offers spouses a chance to meet their squadron's commander or first sergeant and find out about some of the services the chapel and other base organizations offer for families of deployed Airmen, said Chaplain (Capt.) Kathy Scott, 62nd Airlift Wing.

"While people come to the dinner for the fellowship, they'll also get a chance to see what services are out there for them," she said.

There will also be a craft table set up for children.

For more information, call the Chapel Support Center at 982-5556 or the Airman and Family Readiness Center at 982-2695.

Ten McChord Airmen promoted

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — Air Force officials here announced March 7 that 1,284 master sergeants have been selected for promotion to senior master sergeant.

The promotion list, which was released Thursday, contained the names of ten McChord Airmen.

The board, which convened at Randolph Air Force Base Jan. 28 to Feb. 15, considered 14,404 master sergeants for an 8.91 percent select rate. Last year's selection rate was 8.77 percent.




The average score for those selected was 672.67 with an average time in grade and time in service of 4.54 and 20.47 years respectively. The average score was based on the following point averages:

- 134.99 for enlisted performance reports,
- 33.17 for time in grade,
- 21.43 for time in service,
- 21.23 for decorations,
- 68.99 for Air Force supervisory examination, and
- 392.86 for board score.

Those selected for senior master sergeant will be promoted according to their promotion sequence number beginning in April.

See PROMOTIONS, Page 4

Weekend Weather

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		
Hi: 52 Low: 34	Hi: 50 Low: 32	Hi: 53 Low: 36

Forecast generated at 7 a.m. Thursday
Courtesy of the 62nd Operations Support Squadron

Mission Accomplished

Total McChord sorties	2,646
Total flying hours	9,518.3
Cargo moved (tons)	22,721.5
Departure reliability rate	95.4%
Mission capable rate	85.2%
Personnel currently deployed	361
Reservists currently activated.....	133
(Jan. 1 to Wednesday. Numbers updated Wednesday.)	

Don't miss it ...

62nd MXG Change of Command ceremony

The 62nd Maintenance Group Change of Command ceremony is 10:30 a.m. April 2 in Hangar 4.

Enlisted perspective: Maintaining a healthy lifestyle

By
Chief Master Sgt. Rodney J. McKinley
Chief Master Sgt. of the
Air Force

The 21st Century Air Force is truly expeditionary, so it is imperative we are all prepared to meet mission challenges. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is often the first step to accomplishing this goal. A healthy lifestyle not only boosts energy levels, endurance, and reduces stress in every day duties; it can potentially save an Airman's life in a deployed environment. Improving life routines will also help Airmen achieve and maintain Air Force fitness standards and enhance their quality of life. Achieving a healthy lifestyle has a great deal to do with total physical fitness to include aerobic, strength, and flexibility training. It also includes

eating well to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, and avoiding destructive behaviors like using tobacco and drinking alcohol excessively. Tobacco use in any form damages an Airman's health. Smoking causes shortness of breath, decreases lung capacity and energy levels, and damages blood vessels — all very counter-productive to a healthy lifestyle. Second-hand smoke harms the health of everyone around — including family and friends. In a deployed environment, tobacco use may impact safety and the mission through impaired night vision, slowed response time and impaired wound healing. Drinking alcohol in excessive amounts can also degrade a fit warrior force. If Airmen choose to drink alcohol, moderation is key. Responsible drinking minimizes a negative effect on an Airman's personal and professional life. Sharing healthy lifestyle activities with family

and friends can be great fun and extends the benefits to those within an Airman's circle of influence. Preparing tasty, healthy meals together, going for walks, bicycling or playing organized sports adds to the quality of time spent with family and friends. Participating in physical exercise activities with co-workers adds an outstanding opportunity for team and morale-building and helps Wingmen meet their goals. Health and fitness professionals at our Health and Wellness Centers, Fitness Centers, and Medical Treatment Facilities are uniquely qualified to assist Airmen and their family's quest for better health. I encourage everyone to take advantage of their support and expert guidance. Striving to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle is a worthy goal. I know Airmen and their families will find the rewards well worth the effort in both work and play.

Change is best viewed as a positive challenge

By
Lt. Col. John Andrus
62nd Medical Operations Squadron
commander

With the weather warming and new growth appearing, the smell of spring is in the air — bringing with it the promise of change. This means a transition to warmer weather, outdoor activities and longer days. Of course, it also brings the end of a school year, a permanent change of station for many families, changes of command and other organizational changes within the 62nd Maintenance Group, the merging of the mission support and services squadrons, formation of a consolidated wing commanders support staff, consolidation of financial services at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., joint basing initiatives and medical BRAC actions at the 62nd Medical Clinic. Early in my career I was told the story of an older gentleman who,

while sitting on his porch on the outskirts of a western town, saw a family in a loaded wagon approach. It turns out they were just moving into town. They asked, "What is this town like?" He asked them, "What was the town like that you left?" When they responded that they had come from a wonderful town and left many friends behind, he informed them their new town was just as friendly. Later that day, another family in the same circumstance rolled into town with the same question. In speaking of their former home, they responded that they couldn't wait to leave; the people were unfriendly and didn't really give them a fair shake. The old man then replied that this town was the same. The point of the story is that these families could expect to repeat their former experiences because of their attitude and view of the world. A PCS alone would not change that. Martha Washington summed up the lesson well when she said, "I am still deter-

mined to be cheerful and happy, in whatever situation I may be; for I have also learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances." Change is challenging and some handle change better than others. Depending on your individual circumstances, you may view upcoming changes as welcome challenges, scary intruders or something in between. Regardless of our best positive attitude and approach to life, change does cause stress. There is much in the change experience that we do not control. One key to handling change is to focus on those things you can influence rather than expending energy complaining about those things you cannot. Another effective tool to help navigate change is to identify constant, unchanging life threads that will carry through the change process. These may include family or friend associations,

hobbies or interests, fitness routines, academic studies, volunteer service, religious practices and associations, or perhaps a vehicle, a home or some other valued object or possession. Focusing on and keeping these elements in place bring constancy and stability as we move through changing times and circumstances. One thing is sure, our environment is never static. In the Air Force, we experience almost constant change. We can choose a positive or negative approach and determine if we will focus on problems or solutions. Identifying and holding on to the constants in our lives is an effective way to ease us and our families through change. I would hope that we will all enjoy the sunshine, newness and changes brought on by a new season and likewise anticipate that as Team McChord, we will approach our organizational changes with the same enthusiasm and expectation of success. We will not falter — nor will we fail!

Professionals of the week

Western Air Defense Sector

Tech. Sgt. Carlos Gonzalez

Duty title:
Senior controller and assistant non commissioned officer in charge

Duty section:
Maintenance operations center

Hometown:
Las Piedras, Puerto Rico

Why he's tops:
As a senior controller and assistant NCOIC for the maintenance operations center, Sergeant Gonzalez has done a stellar job with managing, scheduling, monitoring, control and coordination support for all maintenance operations, production efforts and interaction with various agencies and organizations. Emphasizing the importance of both professional and off-duty education, he completed all his professional military education requirements while securing his Community College of the Air Force applied science degree in electronics systems technology and bachelor's degree in computer science technology. He's also dedicated to the community, volunteering time and effort to the Alfretta House, the "Jump for Heart" program, Carter Lake Elementary's reading program, the Western Washington Region Brownies and Salvation Army.



Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Kermen

Duty title:
Communications computer systems operations technician

Duty section:
Communications computer systems flight, network support shop

Hometown:
Puyallup, Wash.

Why he's super:
Sergeant Kermen is a network infrastructure technician currently assigned to the network support shop and is proving to be very knowledgeable in his field. Using the same principles and standards, his previous crypto maintenance career field has helped him adjust well to his new job. He studies all of the equipment he is responsible for and can be counted on to make informed decisions. He is able to quickly diagnose possible problems and come up with viable solutions. Sergeant Kermen maintains a very strong work ethic with solid values and is always willing to go the extra mile for anyone in need.



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McChord moves down privatized housing road

By
Carrie Bernard
62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics recently gave Air Mobility Command and McChord the go-ahead to negotiate with the Army and its local housing privatization developer, Equity Residential, for a new McChord family housing community.

As the first step in the process, the 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron has begun working with Equity Residential to develop a comprehensive family housing development and management plan for the base.

“The plan is essential because we’re basically laying the ground work for revitalizing McChord family housing through the construction of new homes for all ranks, as well as potentially renovating a portion of the existing homes and retaining the homes in Olympic Grove,” said Col. Frank Rechner, 62nd Mission Support Group com-

mander. “The process is very deliberate and we’re ensuring we look at our housing needs from all angles.”

Those “angles” include specific Air Force housing requirements and items such as determining where housing can’t be built because of environmental exclusion zones and force protection concerns; these concerns have forced the original CDMP to be reworked.

“We’re working closely with Equity to revise the first draft of the CDMP,” said Colonel Rechner. “Our ultimate goal in this process is to provide the best housing for McChord families.”

According to the colonel, the CDMP needs to meet all the Air Force requirements and provide comparable housing as compared to bases such as Scott, Dover and McGuire Air Force Bases before McChord will finalize the agreement.

According to McChord’s housing office, these are exciting times for families on McChord and as the privatization process moves along, the house team will be pushing out regular updates.

Base notifies well users of monitoring violation

Recent test shows water safe

By
Capt. Suzanne Ovel
62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

In response to a recent well monitoring violation, McChord Bioenvironmental Engineering Element personnel recently conducted a sampling of well No. 2 to test its nitrate levels, discovering the levels are well within acceptable drinking limits as established by the Washington State Department of Health.

Operators of the McChord AFB water system, I.D. # 52200J, located in Pierce County, are required to monitor the base’s drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis; results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not the drinking water meets health standards. In 2007 well No. 2 was not tested for nitrate, and therefore base officials cannot be sure of the quality of the drinking water during that

time. Well No. 2 serves the main base, including the senior staff and officer housing brick quarters.

“Immediately after being notified of the missed test, we sent out our Bioenvironmental Engineering technicians to test the well’s nitrate levels. As expected, and as we’ve seen in years past, the nitrate levels are within the State’s drinking water standards” said Lt. Col. John Andrus, 62nd Medical Operations Squadron commander.

Colonel Andrus said that at this time, no action is required by the well users. Procedures have been changed to ensure the sampling does not get missed in the future. In addition, he said that the main housing area’s wells were sampled in 2007 and were within acceptable limits.

Anyone requesting additional information should contact the Bioenvironmental Engineering Element at 253-982-3921 or at 690 Barnes Blvd, McChord AFB, Wash.

Good Friday and Easter Service at the chapel

The Chapel Support Center will host a Protestant Good Friday Service on Friday in the auditorium. Protestant Easter worship services start at 6:30 a.m. March 23 with a sunrise service in Chapel 1. Immediately after the service, people are welcome to attend a free catered breakfast by Pappa Eddies in the auditorium. Other Easter services include the Liturgical Service at 8:30 a.m. in Chapel 1, the Traditional Service at 11 a.m. in Chapel 1 and the Contemporary Service at 11 a.m. in the Chapel Support Center.

For more information, call the Chapel Support Center at 982-5556.



From PROMOTIONS, Page 1

2008 senior master sergeant selects

• Master Sgt. Paul Julbes, 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

• Master Sgt. Brian Payne, 62nd AMXS

• Master Sgt. Kevin Harriott, 62nd Communications Squadron

• Master Sgt. Lorenzo Jones, 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron

• Master Sgt. Richard Snider, 62nd LRS

• Master Sgt. Robert Erickson, 62nd Maintenance Squadron

• Master Sgt. Alan Hernandez, 62nd MXS

• Master Sgt. Annette Sisseck, 62nd MXS

• Master Sgt. Stephen Scheitzach, 62nd MXS

• Master Sgt. Arleen Prochazka, 62nd Operations Support Squadron

From HOME, Page 1

“This gives us a chance for four months to make sure we’re all on the same sheet of music and make sure any concerns we have with our Airmen are being met,” Colonel Newberry said.

While Airmen in McChord’s flying squadrons are not deployed over the next four months, their commitment level to fulfilling Air Mobility Command’s mission of combat airlift remains the same, said Col. Joseph Wiley, 62nd Operations Group commander.

“We are still just as busy as ever,” Colonel Wiley said. “It’s just a different use of the crews and the aircraft to fill the taskings, but they are still being used.”

Although the EAS cycle gives Airmen a predictable schedule of when they are going to deploy and when they are going to be home, they may still be away from home on temporary duty assignments during the lull in the cycle here, he said.

“They are going to be out there TDY with aggressive rates,” Colonel Wiley said.



Photo by Abner Guzman

National Prayer Luncheon

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Larry Bailey, 62nd Airlift Wing, offers the invocation before the start of the National Prayer Luncheon March 6 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. More than 300 people attended the event.



McChord Airman achieves career milestone

By

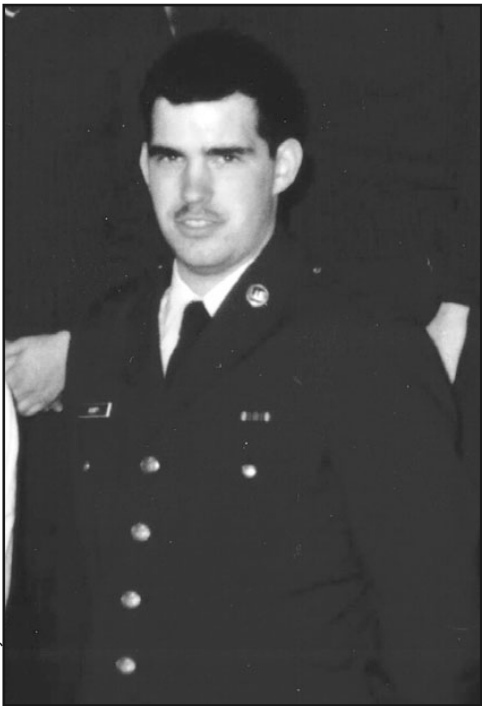
Staff Sgt. Eric Burks
62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Ten-thousand hours. That’s a little more than 416 days, or 600,000 minutes. Regardless of how you measure it, Master Sgt. Pat McCarty, a loadmaster with the 8th Airlift Squadron, has spent a lot of time in airplanes.

“Time literally flies by,” said Sergeant McCarty, who has served for more than 23 years in the Air Force and recently joined an elite group of Airmen who have more than 10,000 flying hours under their belt.

“I was flying back from Antarctica to Christchurch, New Zealand,” Sergeant McCarty said of the flight that put him past the milestone. Along for the ride was former 62nd Airlift Wing Commander Col. Jerry Martinez, who was flying to Christchurch to inspect the wing’s support of Operation Deep Freeze.

Sergeant McCarty credited his wealth of flying hours to the fact that he has seen a majority of flying operations instead of desk jobs. He has remained a loadmaster his en-



Courtesy Photos



From his time at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, left, to his assignment at McChord as a loadmaster for the 8th Airlift Squadron, Master Sgt. Pat McCarty has logged more than 10,000 hours in the air.

tire career, and aside from a three-year teaching stint at Altus Air Force Base, Okla., the majority of

his service has been “on the line”.

“When I got to Sheppard in November of 1984, I didn’t know what

to expect,” he said. “My first time on an airplane was flying to basic training.”

Since then, his career as a loadmaster has taken him to every continent in the world.

The first operational mission he participated in was Just Cause, over Panama in 1989. Since then, he has been involved in nearly every major operational mission, aside from missing the beginning of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom while teaching at Altus.

While Sergeant McCarty has seen his career field evolve over the years, he said the biggest change was moving from the C-141 Starlifter to the C-17 Globemaster III. The C-141 was 1950s and 60s technology, he said, and required more manual labor. The C-17 is more automated, which has enabled loadmasters to “do more with less”, he said.

But one thing hasn’t changed over the years for Sergeant McCarty.

The fact remains that for a loadmaster, the majority of work is done before and after takeoff. Once airborne, the mission focuses on ensuring the comfort and safety of the aircrew and passengers, he said.

0-0-1-3



The medical standard is one drink for women or two drinks for men if a daily drinker.

For periodic drinking, the standard is to keep the blood alcohol level or blood alcohol content under 0.05.

Use personal risk management
Use situational awareness
Use your wingman
Use a friend

0 Drinks under age 21
0 DUI’s
Max 1 drink per hour
Max 3 drinks in one night

DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE



McChord Airmen

AROUND THE WORLD



Courtesy photo

QAYYRAH AIRFIELD WEST, Iraq — Staff Sgt. Joseph Quiroga drives a 60K loader while Airman 1st Class Ryan Lafferty spots for him during a recent deployment. Both are from the 62nd Aerial Port Squadron.



Courtesy photo

QAYYRAH AIRFIELD WEST, Iraq — Airman 1st Class Michael Felicio spots Airman 1st Class Anthony Mladek as he moves a load with a 10K all-terrain forklift during a recent deployment. Both are from the 62nd Aerial Port Squadron.



62nd LRS makes video magic

By Tyler Hemstreet
Staff writer

A select group of 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron Airmen recently accomplished one of the toughest missions the squadron has ever been tasked for.

But the mission didn't have anything to do with leading convoys through hostile enemy territory, replacing cylinder head gaskets on a Humvee or fueling up airplanes.

Tech. Sgt. Darryll Daum, Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Abel, Staff Sgt. Ricky West and Capt. Rick Garza, all 62nd LRS, were tasked with putting together a video portraying a day in the life of an LRS Airman at McChord.

The video was all part of an extensive awards package in an effort by the squadron to garner the Daedalian Maj. Gen. Warren R. Carter Effectiveness Award, a title handed out by the Air Force for the best logistics readiness squadron in the service. The team also helped put together a similar second video for the fuels section in its pursuit to win the American Petroleum Institute Award, another Air Force-level award.

The team of Airmen did everything from coordinating and filming all the interviews with commanders of units LRS supports and gathering pictures, power point slides and video to putting together a storyboard and making the videos on their personal computers using movie-making software.

"The task was a little bit daunting at first, but we really didn't have that much time to think about it," Captain Garza said of the short two-week deadline to compose the 10-minute video.

Once all the interviews, video and photos were gathered, the team hunkered down in a conference room in the LRS

building for nearly a week straight putting together the videos.

The marathon production timeline included several all-night sessions where the team worked feverishly, aided by large doses of caffeinated beverages and helpful squadron members dropping off various food items.

"It was painful at times," Sergeant Daum said of the marathon sessions. "During one time I think I was up for 55 hours straight. But I had a blast doing it with the guys."

The Airmen forged on with the production process, fueled by cat naps on the conference room floor and in cars outside. "At no point was anyone complaining," Captain Garza said. "They were all hard-charging."

One Airman even fried his laptop's hard drive working on the project. It didn't matter. He went home and got his desktop computer to finish the job.

"It was great to see the four guys in a little room working as a team with a common goal," said Lt. Col. Travis Condon, 62nd LRS commander. "They produced two awesome videos that do a great job of selling our squadron."

The team worked up until the last minute, uploading the videos to the Pentagon a mere four hours before the final deadline, Captain Garza said.

What would have been a tall task even for those working in the TV news industry, the fact that four Airmen with minimal video production turned in a quality product speaks volumes about the effort of each person in the group, Colonel Condon said.

"Not bad for a couple of wrench turners and two fuel guys," Captain Garza said.

The results of the contest will be announced before the end of the month.



Photos by Abner Gorman

Master Sgt. Shayne Somavia, left, and Staff Sgt. Ricky West, both 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron, review video footage in the LRS fuels distribution wing conference room.



Airman Tritobia Cash, 62nd LRS, left, makes her video debut as she fuels up a McChord C-17.



Col. Jeffrey Stephenson, 62nd Airlift Wing commander, reviews video footage of a recorded message he made for the LRS video with Capt. Rick Garza, 62nd LRS.



Senior Airman Christian Delgado, 62nd LRS multi-purpose vehicle maintenance shop, completes a final inspection of the hydraulic system on a snowmobile engine recently. The video contained not only video from 62nd LRS Airmen all over McChord going through their daily jobs, but also still photos similar to this one.

McChord Airmen help All-AF soccer team win gold

By
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff Writer

The All-Air Force men’s soccer team wrapped up a gold medal at the 2008 Armed Forces Soccer Championship Tournament Jan. 31 through Feb. 5 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C., and three McChord Airmen played a big role in the team’s success.

Andy Dulin, 4th Airlift Squadron; Paul Gagliardi, 8th AS; and Mark Robertson, 62nd Aerial Port Squadron; played vital roles in the run to the championship, which snapped the Army’s two-year stranglehold on the gold medal.

The Air Force team went 5-1 throughout the tournament, which featured teams from the Marine Corps, Navy and Army.

After winning the tournament’s first game 2-0 over the Navy, the

Airmen fell to Army 3-1 in game two. But Air Force bounced back and won four straight to take the gold, defeating the Marines 2-0 in the championship game. Army took second place with a 3-2-1 record, Navy was third with a 2-3-1 record and Marines finished in fourth place with 1-5-0 record.

“It felt good ... it was time to get that monkey off our backs,” said right wing Robertson, referring to the two previous years that the team finished second in the tournament to Army.

Gagliardi, a forward who played soccer for four years at the Air Force Academy, scored two goals in the championship game and was voted to the all-tournament team.

“This team may have not been the most skilled team we’ve had over the last three years I’ve played, but we found a way to win,” he said. “Winning this year was the best feeling I’ve felt in a



Photo by Steve Montminy

Paul Gagliardi, 8th Airlift Squadron, dribbles by an Army defender during a soccer game at the 2008 Armed Forces Soccer Championship Tournament Jan. 31 through Feb. 5 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C. Gagliardi, a forward who scored two goals in the championship game, was voted to the all-tournament team.

while.”

Dulin, who played the stopper position at the academy — and

was a member of the 4th AS intra-mural soccer team here which won
Continued on Page 11



From Soccer, Page 10

last year’s championship — said everyone on the Air Force team checked their egos at the door and really gelled with each other when they stepped onto the soccer field.

“Skill-wise, we were the most skilled team in the tournament, but I really thought our experience carried us through,” Dulin said.

And despite the tough schedule of six games in six days, Dulin said fitness wasn’t even an issue.

“We weren’t real deep, but we were still able to compete,” he said.

That fitness level and experience was tested several times on the month-long soccer trip to the east coast, as the Air Force team played an elite 18-and-younger club soccer team (part of the prestigious International Management Group Soccer Academy) in Bradenton, Fla., as a tune-up for the tournament. The teams played to a 1-1 tie.

“The game was a highlight for me because it was fun to see if I



Photo by Steve Montminy

Mark Robertson, 62nd Aerial Port Squadron, winds up for a kick during a soccer game at the 2008 Armed Forces Soccer Championship Tournament Jan. 31 through Feb. 5 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C.

could still match up with people younger than me that are just getting ready to start college,” Gagliardi said.

Bringing home a gold medal was second to the overall experience each McChord Airman had playing on the team.

“Playing soccer for my job was awesome,” Gagliardi said. “It was one of the best jobs I’ve ever had in the Air Force.”



NFL players kick off USO tour in Kyrgyzstan

By
Lt. Col. Adriane Craig
376th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

MANAS AIR BASE, Kyrgyzstan (AFPN) — Three National Football League stars and a senior sports writer visited Manas Air Base Airmen as part of a United Service Organizations tour here recently.

The San Diego Chargers’ Luis Castillo, Chicago Bears’ Tommie Harris, Carolina Panthers’ Mike Rucker and Sports Illustrated writer Peter King arrived in Kyrgyzstan to show their support as they visit servicemembers throughout the region.

Manas AB is home to the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing, which serves as a mobility hub for Operation Enduring Freedom and International Security Assistance Force missions. Strategically situated as the only U.S. base with a northern approach into Afghanistan, wing members fly aerial refueling missions to support the network of airpower over Afghanistan and move people and cargo, enabling air and ground operations for U.S. and coalition forces.

The visitors saw that mission firsthand as they made their way around the small base, and eventually got to climb into a Humvee and explore the KC-135 Stratotanker and C-17 Globemaster III aircraft that fly out of the base.

“We’re getting a lot out of this also, in just being able to see what you guys do every day,” Mr. Harris said.



Tommie Harris of the Chicago Bears contemplates his next play during a friendly game of Dominoes with Staff Sgt. Brian Williams (left) and Staff Sgt. Anthony Mayuga March 4 at the recreation center on Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. Harris, San Diego Chargers Luis Castillo, Carolina Panthers Mike Rucker and Sports Illustrated writer Peter King took part in the United States Organizations National Football League tour to visit servicemembers supporting the war. They participated in a question and answer session with the Airmen and Soldiers and Marines transiting the base, hanging around afterward to play games and sing karaoke.

For Mr. Rucker, it was all about the people.

“What I’m intrigued with is how — from top to bottom — how well organized you guys are,” Mr. Rucker said. “It’s a working machine.”

The Carolina defensive lineman also instantly recognized the camaraderie of the folks far from home.

“Now you guys are family members among yourselves,” he said.

Mr. King led a question and answer period for the players in the

recreation facility at Manas AB. Airmen stationed at the base and Soldiers transiting the base asked questions ranging from childhood heroes, pregame rituals, to the future of the game.

The celebrities then hung around for several hours, signing autographs, talking or — in the case of Mr. Harris — playing dominoes and singing karaoke.

The trip was “unbelievable,” Mr. Castillo said. “The thing we really

take away from this is the people. For you to come out all this way to defend us and our freedom and allow us to play the game that we love to play.”

It’s an irony not lost on the Chargers defensive end.

“It’s funny because a lot of the slogans we use when we play are from you ‘we’re going to war’ and all that,” he said. “You guys are doing it for real. We just want to say thank you to all of you.”



Tuition assistance allows Airmen to reach educational goals

By
Staff Sgt. Julie Weckerlein
Secretary of the Air Force
Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The Air Force Military Tuition Assistance program, which allows Airmen to reach educational goals, recently identified an opportunity to link force development initiatives with the program after receiving feedback from the 2007 Air Force Audit Agency.

“Historically, MilTA has been used as a recruitment incentive wherein individuals are offered the opportunity to work towards personal higher education goals, while serving our nation,” said Joe McDade, the director of Force Development. “While focused on enhancing Airmen’s educational levels, force development seeks to deliberately link advanced education with Air Force institutional and occupational requirements.”

Allowing Airmen to pursue higher education benefits both the individual and the Air Force, he said.

“A college education extends beyond building an area of expertise,” Mr. McDade said. “It also develops unique competencies we value as an institution including strategic thinking, analytical abilities, and communication skills, which serve to further develop critical leadership skills. Advanced degrees, whether

focused on individual pursuits or directly linked with force development goals, are a win-win for all of us.”

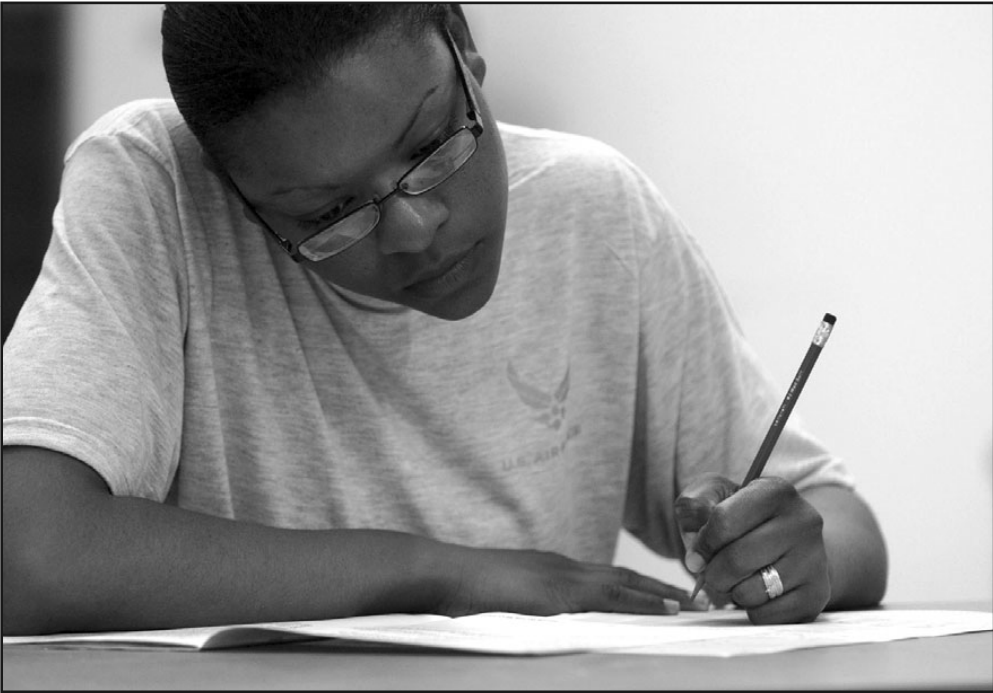
The Air Force Audit Agency report stated that 10 percent of the military personnel degree plans reviewed were unrelated to the Airmen’s specialties, using as an example an aerospace propulsion journeyman who received money to earn a real estate agent license. The report recommended limiting MilTA benefits to educational goals specifically linked to force development.

However, the recommendation to limit benefits would erode the recruiting and retention goals of the original program, said Mr. McDade.

“Rather than an all or nothing approach, we’re pursuing a dual-purposed approach,” he said. “Allow individuals with personal ambitions beyond the Air Force to pursue their own educational goals, while at the same time, providing Airmen interested in furthering their Air Force professional goals an opportunity to do so by linking the programs.”

This ensures the Air Force maintains the recruiting and retention benefits inherent in the program while also providing synergy with force development efforts, Mr. McDade said.

Efforts to instill a dual-purposed approach include ensuring institutional competencies are synchronized within the MilTA program, while also working with career field managers to identify advanced de-



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jonathan Snyder

Senior Airman Jaquetta Bice concentrates while taking a College Level Entrance Exam Program test Jan. 3 at Ali Base, Iraq. The 407th Expeditionary Services Squadron Education Center gives servicemembers the opportunity to further their education and career development. Airman Bice is assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and is deployed from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C.

grees that are relevant to each functional community.

In a 2006 letter to Airmen, both Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley reiterated the importance of advanced education.

“In a smaller, leaner and more expeditionary-focused Air Force, it is essential that our Airmen have the knowledge and competency to accomplish our mission,” they wrote. “Both of us want to encourage Airmen, not discourage them, from pursuing advanced education.”



Deployed spouses dinner

The deployed spouses dinner is 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday at the Chapel Support Center. For more information or to RSVP, call 982-5556 or e-mail 62aw.hc@mcchord.af.mil.

Commissary early closure

The McChord Commissary will close early on Tuesday so the staff can conduct an inventory. The hours of operation will be from at 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Normal hours of operation will resume on Wednesday.

New Housing Office hours

The McChord Housing Office has recently revised its hours of operation. Walk-in hours are now 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointment hours are 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. For community housing assistance, call 982-5517, and for military housing assistance, call 982-5516.

62nd MXG Change of Command ceremony

The 62nd Maintenance Group Change of Command ceremony is 10:30 a.m. April 2 in Hanger 4. Col. James Weber will be passing command to Col. Tracy Smiedendorf.

Retiree Dining Out

The annual Retiree Dining Out is 6 p.m. April 18 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. The menu features prime rib for \$22.95 or salmon at \$20.95, including gratuity. This invitation is extended to all retirees, their families and friends. The event is a great way to spend an evening at reasonable expense. Business dress and tie are required for men but everyone is encouraged to wear their mess dress uniform if possible. The guest speaker for the event is Col.

Ronald Pace, Madigan Army Medical Center deputy commander of clinical services. For more information about the event, contact the Retirees Activities Office at 982-3214 or visit the Web site at www.mcchordrao.com.

Rape Aggression Defense course

A free RAD course will be taught here throughout the month of April. The classes are from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. each Thursday of the month and the course is open to women ages 16 and older. Participants learn risk reduction tips and physical defense strategies taught by certified instructors in this national and internationally accredited course. Prior self defense experience is not required. Call 982-0457 for registration.

Parent University seminar

The annual Parent University seminar is April 5 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. The free one-day seminar offers opportunities for all participants to enhance their parenting skills and features workshops, an information fair, door prizes and free child care. For more information or to register, contact Eva Taylor at 982-9043 or 982-9038.

Air Force Aid Society

Concerned about the soaring cost of higher education for your children? Maybe the Air Force Aid Society can help. The Society's General Henry Arnold Education Grant Program awards \$2,000 grants to sons and daughters of active duty, Title 10 AGR/Reservists on extended active duty, Title 32 AGR performing full-time active duty, retired, retired Reservists with 20 plus qualifying years of service and deceased Air Force members. Also eligible are spouses (residing stateside) of active duty and Title 10 AGR/Reservists on extended

Faith and Worship Programs for Easter and Lent

For more information on Easter/Lent services, call the chapel support center at 982-5556.

Adult Bible study is from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the base chapel support center, Bldg. 746

active duty and surviving spouses of deceased members. Last year, 75 percent of the McChord certified entries received the \$2,000 award. Call your AFAS section at the Airman & Family Readiness Center at 982-2695 for more information and an application, or visit the Air Force Aid Society's web site at www.afas.org.

Lost and found

The 62nd Security Forces Squadron is currently in possession of numerous items of personal property such as bicycles, keys, etc. These items were found on or near McChord and may be reclaimed by contacting the Security Forces Investigation Section, located in Bldg. 160. For more information, contact the Investigations Section at 982-5936.

Do you have a story idea? Spread the news in The NW Airlifter! Call Public Affairs at 982-5637 or e-mail us at northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil

